BLAME GAME
Audit of maintenance district in Fountain lists reasons for issues
Local & State, Metro 3

D-11 kids not alone in wishes for snow

By SHARI CHANEY GRIFFIN
THE GAZETTE

Terry Bishop has been hoping for just one more snow day.

Colorado Springs School District 11 added 30 minutes to the school day in January, banking on more snow days in Colorado's often snowiest months — March and April.

No luck so far. The white stuff hasn't come.

"What bad weather we had has been on the weekends, which adds insult to injury," Bishop, the district's superintendent, said Wednesday.

Without a snow day — and without changing the last day of school or making school days shorter again — teachers in D-11 would work more days than their contract allows.

Wednesday, the board approved a calendar change that depends on Mother Nature and reads like a choose-your-own-adventure book.

If there are no snow days between now and April 18, middle and high school teachers will not work May 11, and the last day of school for middle and high school students will be one day early — May 23.

May 11 was set to be a conference day for teachers only.

Elementary teachers would keep the conference day, but students' last day would be May 22.

If there is one snow day, which seemed likely to many at Wednesday night's meeting because of a forecast of a possible blizzard tonight through Friday — the last day of school for all students would be May 23. If there are two snow days, there will be no change in the school calendar.

Before the board voted, Bishop handed out copies of the Farmer's Almanac, which says "heavy thunderstorms Northern and Central Rockies, moving out over Plains" for today through Sunday.

Adoption bill still separating parties

Senate gives preliminary approval; 1 reading left

By HANK LACEY
THE GAZETTE

DENVER • Same-sex couples would be allowed to adopt a partner's child in Colorado under a bill given preliminary approval Wednesday by the Senate.

The bill passed on a party-line voice vote over the objections of critics who accused majority Democrats of trying to override the voters' will.

Sen. Ted Harvey, R-Highlands Ranch, said HB1330 would essentially overturn voters' rejection last November of Referendum I, which would have sanctioned gay unions.

Harvey said that voters might have been somewhat supportive of civil unions for gay and lesbian couples, but he has no doubt about where they stand on adoption by same-sex couples.

2007 General Assembly

"The people of the state of Colorado, who may be split on civil unions, are not split on and are very adamant against same-sex adoptions," he said.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. Jennifer Veiga, D-Denver, disagreed.

"HB1330 does nothing to recognize any relationships," Veiga said. "What it does is recognize that there are gay couples out there who have kids."

Veiga pointed out that the bill does not allow a gay couple to adopt a child that is un-

SEE ADOPTION • PAGE 2

Toxins? Bring 'em on

KIRK SPEER, THE GAZETTE

Lt. Mike Offut, left, a member of the Colorado Springs Fire Department's Hazardous Materials unit, ran police recruit Jedidiah Abrams through a simulated decontamination drill Wednesday.

Harris offers county free ballot help

By BILL McKEOWN
THE GAZETTE

If the recently retired administrator for El Paso County works with top county officials to develop a plan to ask taxpayers for more money, he will do it for free.

Terry Harris

Terry Harris, 64, made that decision after a recent Gazette article that reported he had been rehired as a part-time employee making $68 an hour.

County administrator Jeff Greene said this week Harris made the offer after being stung by the implication he is double-dipping.

Greene said that's not true: He asked his former boss to work part-time on several projects for which he was uniquely qualified, and Harris agreed to do so as a favor to him. Harris has previously said he retired, in part,

SEE COUNTY • PAGE 2

CORRECTIONS
CLARIFICATIONS

The Gazette corrects errors of fact in this space. If you find mistakes, please call 636-0266 during business hours.

- A Metro 1 story Wednesday about new schools in the area's districts needs clarification. On April 27, kindergarten students can be registered for the two new elementary schools in Colorado Springs School District 11. Parents of those who will attend McAuliffe can register students at Henry Elementary, while those who will attend Freedom can be registered at Scott Elementary.

All other students new to the district who will attend the new schools should register from May 7 to June 15 at the district administration building, 1115 N. El Paso St.

- The calendar on A2 Wednesday misstated the days of the week. The 12th is today, the 13th is Friday, and the 14th is Saturday. The listings were accurate for the date, not the day.

- A schedule with a front-page story on Wednesday about Midwest Airlines' plan to begin service to Colorado Springs misstated arrival and departure times. Departures to Kansas City are scheduled for 6 a.m. daily except Sundays, 10:25 a.m. daily and 6:05 p.m. daily except Saturdays; arrivals for 9:55 a.m. daily except Sundays, 5:35 p.m. daily and 9:05 p.m. daily except Saturdays.

UPDATE
UCCS LAB

What's new: The University of Colorado at Colorado Springs will build a state-of-the-art laboratory for K-12 education in science, technology and math.

The lab will be constructed in the new $53.1 million Science and Engineering building scheduled to open in spring 2008.

Who's paying: The Daniels Fund is paying for the lab with a $500,000 donation to the CU Foundation.

What it will look like: The more than 1,000-square-foot lab will be a place for students, primarily middle schoolers, and teachers to come for experiments and demonstrations in science, technology and math, said Jeremy Haefner, dean of the UCCS College of Engineering and Applied Science.

Haefner said the lab will likely have interactive kiosks, big-screen TV monitors with video-game style activities, learning displays, lab tables and other features for hands-on science.

What it will do: For students, the lab will host field trips and camp-style workshops in the summer, perhaps with students staying in the dorms, Haefner said. Tours to the lab will include a chance for students to see live research in the science and engineering building, perhaps through glass walls or specially marked safe zones.

For teachers, the lab will be a place for professional development and a place to exchange ideas. They may also be invited for multiday workshops. Some summer workshops could include students and teachers together.

BRIAN NEWSOME, THE GAZETTE

Barricade leaves many seeing red

City vows to communicate better after turning street into dead end

By BILL VOGRIN
THE GAZETTE

SIDE STREETS
neighborhood people & issues

The west side of Colorado Springs is a mishmash of wildly twisting streets, garages turned into homes, neighborhoods without sidewalks.

A good example is West St. Vrain, home to Fred Bishop since he built his house in 1954 in the newly annexed neighborhood. Donald Shedden moved in a couple houses away in 1962. The men, both 86, loved living on St. Vrain despite its goofy intersection at 18th Street.

Today, however, they are angry. Their block is in an uproar because the city turned their street into a dead end. Without talking to them.

In 1954, St. Vrain was the northern edge of an area annexed into the city. At the west end of the street, a landowner declined to be annexed or sell the city enough property to allow St. Vrain to reach 18th Street at its full 38-foot width.

So, the curb ends abruptly and St. Vrain quickly shrinks to about 8 feet wide where it meets 18th Street.

The south side of the street has a curb and utility pole on the corner. A chain-link fence, trees and bushes define the north side. There is no curb or sidewalk.

"It's never been a problem," Bishop said. "I drove it for all those years. And I've never seen an accident there."

Shedden agreed.

"People here don't have any trouble with that outlet," Shedden said. "You just slow up going through. If you meet somebody, you back up and let them go through."

Carin Willis and Nicholas Becker didn't know the history when they bought a house next to the corner in July 2005. All they know is what they saw out their windows: trucks driving dangerously close to the power pole to squeeze through the opening.

"I've seen them jump the curb," Willis said. "A semitruck came through once. It's ridiculous. It's very unsafe. There's no sidewalks. There's not even a stop or yield sign."

CAROL LAWRENCE, THE GAZETTE

Donald Shedden, left, and Fred Bishop, second from left, joined other St. Vrain Street residents at the much-disliked barricade.

SEE SIDE STREETS • PAGE 2

Capital-crimes unit may be hit

Bid to end death penalty dropped

By ED SEALOVER
THE GAZETTE

DENVER • A Democratic lawmaker pulled the plug on his effort to end Colorado's death penalty Wednesday but kept alive a measure that would cut in half a capital-crimes investigation unit.

Attorney General John Suthers criticized the bill as a "backdoor approach" to trying to end the death penalty. The five Republicans and one of the Democrats on the 13-member House Appropriations Committee opposed it.

House Bill 1094 moves to the House floor, where it is expected to get a more thorough vetting about the merits of limiting the attorney general's involvement in death penalty cases than it did Wednesday, when committee members focused on its fiscal impacts.

By cutting two employees from the Capital Crimes and Homicide Assistance Unit, the bill would shift $100,000 next year to a Colorado Bureau of Investigation cold-case unit and forensic equipment.

"As a public-safety matter, I think it's more important to solve those unsolved homicides than to have a death penalty that we never use," said sponsor, Rep. Paul Weissman, D-Louisville.

Weissman's bill originally eliminated the capital crimes unit and the state's death penalty, but he toned it down after seeing he could not get the support of the Legislature or Gov. Bill Ritter. He hopes to end the death penalty eventually, but he won't try it for several more years, he said.

Just two people sit on Colorado's death row, and only one person has been executed since the death penalty was reinstated in the 1970s. The one-person cold-case unit, which would be created under another bill moving through the House, would create a database of about 1,200 unsolved Colorado homicides and analyze them.

Suthers said in a statement that the capital-crimes unit also assists district attorneys on cold-case investigations, helps with grand jury investigations, aids with death penalty prosecutions and handles death penalty cases on appeal.

"If Colorado has a death penalty, prosecutors need the resources to make it viable," the former district attorney from El Paso County wrote.

CONTACT THE WRITER: (303) 837-0613 or ed.sealover@gazette.com

Campaign-finance bill would close 527 loophole

By HANK LACEY
THE GAZETTE

DENVER • The shadowy groups that have paid for a blizzard of negative advertisements in recent Colorado political campaigns would have to disclose their donors under a bill that advanced in the Senate on Wednesday.

House Bill 1174 aims to fill a loophole in the federal campaign-finance law that allows so-called 527 groups to influence campaigns while avoiding disclosure of the sources of their money. The bill is expected to go to Gov. Bill Ritter's desk after the House accepts minor amendments.

Federal campaign-finance law requires 527 organizations, which are named for a section of the federal income tax code, to disclose donor information to the IRS only if the group tries to influence an election for federal office and spends more than $25,000.

"With passage of this we will become the second state in the country to basically close this gigantic loophole in campaign-finance law so that, for the first time, the public will actually be able to tell who is responsible for ads, largely attack ads, and follow the money," said Rep. Morgan Carroll, D-Aurora.

"Colorado just took a huge step forward for good government today," he said.

Sean Gallagher, a Denver campaign-finance lawyer, said the bill may also have the benefit of reducing the number of attack ads launched against candidates of both parties.

"Up until now, the exception for 527s from campaign-finance disclosure laws has given a handful of wealthy donors disproportionate influence over Colorado's elections," Gallagher said. "527s with ties to both parties have made some pretty outlandish accusations, and adding some transparency to their donor list can only encourage them to act more responsibly."

The vote to approve the bill was not close, but some Republicans dissented.

Sen. Steve Ward, R-Littleton, said he worries the bill impedes free speech and bucks a long tradition of anonymous political speech in the United States.

"The Federalist Papers were written by people who published them under different names," Ward said. "The whole idea of anonymous pamphleteering is such a vibrant part of the American political culture going back 250 years. It's older than the Republic."

CONTACT THE WRITER: (303) 837-0697 or hank.lacey@gazette.com

COUNTY: Harris won't do commissioner duties

FROM PAGE 1

because of health issues.

Greene said he offered Harris $68 an hour — essentially the hourly rate of his $142,000-a-year job before he retired. Greene asked Harris to work 20 hours a week for four months and then, if needed, one day a week for the remainder of the year.

Harris, who retired in early January and began working again in mid-February, is developing procedures for implementing the county's recently overhauled land-use code. He has also been analyzing whether changes need to be made in development fees or in the personnel or procedures in the county's planning services department.

Development fees were imposed under Harris' tenure as county administrator and last reviewed in 2003. Greene said Harris has the most expertise to determine whether they need to be adjusted.

Harris is ahead of schedule on both tasks and should have them done soon, at a cost of about $8,200, Greene said. If the county had hired a consultant to review just the development fees, the cost would have been about $15,000, Greene said.

But the one-day-a-week provision of Harris's employment deal was less well-defined. With Greene out of the country at the time, county officials were coy about what work Harris would do one day a week for nine months. Harris later told The Gazette that Greene asked him to help lay the foundation for a possible ballot issue that would ask county taxpayers for more money.

Greene said using taxpayer money to pay for work on a ballot issue is legal — up to the point commissioners vote to put a tax increase on a ballot.

There is a caveat to Harris' offer to work for free on a possible ballot issue. Greene said if the job expanded into far more time than an hour or so a week, Harris has a right to be paid for his work.

County Commissioner Sallie Clark, who said she thinks the county needs more money for certain departments, defended using Harris to do preliminary work on a possible ballot issue next year.

She said it was too early to say what kind of a tax increase would be sought. But she said Harris, who helped pass the sales tax to fund the Regional Transportation Authority, would be invaluable in assessing the needs of each county department and developing a list of funding needs to present to voters.

She said Harris would not be doing work commissioners and Greene are paid to do.

"Terry was brought in to put together a viable plan and be realistic about what we need going forward," she said. "I'm not saying Jeff Greene isn't capable of doing the job to pull all that together."

Commissioner Douglas Bruce, who initially called Harris' hiring double-dipping, said he accepts Greene's explanation that Harris might be the right person to review development fees. But the well-known tax foe said he will object to Harris being paid for any work on a possible ballot issue to raise taxes.

"I do not support anybody being paid (with government money) to scheme or connive or lobby or plot for higher taxes," he said.

ADOPTION: If passed, Ritter next to weigh in

FROM PAGE 1

related to either partner, leaving intact Colorado's law prohibiting such adoptions.

She also argued that children growing up with two parents of the same gender fare as well as their counterparts in traditional families.

"There's no evidence that children of gay or lesbian parents are any less likely to succeed than children of heterosexual parents," she said. "You cannot determine that, simply because kids were raised by gay parents, that they're having any disadvantage compared to kids raised by heterosexual parents."

A number of national organizations of health care professionals, including the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Society of Pediatric Psychology, have endorsed second-parent adoption laws as being beneficial to children.

Sen. Shawn Mitchell, R-Broomfield, said that children living in nontraditional families can be protected through contracts and guardianships, but Veiga said that is unrealistic.

"Can you have a guardianship relationship? You could, but those are contested all the time," Veiga said. "And it's not the same as adoption in the eyes of the law. A guardianship will also only get you so far. It won't address health care, disability, child care issues. It's expensive, and it's inadequate."

The bill also allows grandparents, aunts and uncles, and adult siblings of the child to adopt a child and assume parental status along with the birth parent.

"We can argue all day long about whether it's best to have a mother and father, but that's not the point," Veiga said. "The fact is, not all children have that in Colorado and we need to recognize the reality of what exists and not what we want to exist."

HB1330 faces a third reading in the Senate before going to Gov. Bill Ritter.

CONTACT THE WRITER: (303) 837-0697 or hank.lacey@gazette.com

SIDE STREETS: 'Very substandard intersection'

FROM PAGE 1

After months of worrying a tragedy might happen at the intersection, Willis and Becker called the city.

Traffic engineer Dick Carlson came to see the intersection and was shocked.

"It's hardly even a lane," Carlson said. "It is a very substandard intersection. I'm mystified how this ever happened. We felt obliged to take some action. Either make it safe or close it."

Until a final decision is made, Carlson decided to barricade the intersection but didn't notify the neighbors.

"I admit it was my error not contacting the residents affected by the closure," he said.

But even with pressure from the City Council, the barricade will remain until the intersection can be made safe.

Carlson is exploring buying land on the north side to widen the street to accommodate two-way traffic. Or widening it enough to allow making it a one-way only.

"We're going to be creative in coming up with something that will work," Carlson said.

Most important, he will make sure everyone on Saint Vrain knows what's going on.

"We're going to gather all the information and present it to the folks affected by it," he said. "We'll be contacting them within two or three weeks."

Tell me about your neighborhood: 636-0193 or bill.vogrin@gazette.com

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Other voices

McCain miscalculates chances of success

OPINION
E. J. DIONNE
Syndicated columnist

John McCain's 2000 campaign for president failed, but it was an unruly and joyous romp. His campaign this time feels quite different: Carefully planned, meticulously calculated — and a tragedy.

Tragedy, not a word to be invoked lightly, typically involves a morally admirable person who struggles toward a goal and experiences suffering as his own choices collide with forces unleashed by the gods or by circumstance. The distinguished theater critic Walter Kerr once wrote that the tragic man "is free to free himself of obeisance to any power."

McCain's political trajectory over the past seven years might best be understood as a conflict between his desire to resist the Republican powers that be and his need to appease those forces lest they block his last chance at the White House.

His efforts at appeasement have muddied his image as a heroic dissident while bringing him little gain. And so he runs behind Rudy Giuliani in the polls, and Mitt Romney in fundraising.

There is another tragic element: McCain suffered mightily during the 2000 presidential primaries at the hands of George W. Bush's political machine.

Yet McCain is being dragged down now by his loyalty to the very same Bush and his policies in Iraq. Earlier in the war, McCain had been a fierce critic of the president's strategy and tactics. But those criticisms count for little now. Bush destroyed McCain's candidacy by design the first time and is smothering him by association now.

McCain had hoped that this week would mark the beginning of his comeback, but it got off to a difficult start. Coverage of his Sunday appearance on "60 Minutes" was dominated by his apology for talking about how safe parts of Baghdad were — even as CBS footage showed that McCain's stroll through a market was peaceful only because of the formidable military presence around him.

But no matter what he does to court, soothe and pamper the right, many in its ranks will never abide him. He spoke out too forcefully in 2000 for campaign finance reform and against "the demands of big money special interests." He condemned the self-appointed" leaders of conservative groups — a rather influential constituency — and singled out Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson as "the agents of intolerance." People in politics have long memories.

In deciding to make up with the president, McCain's chosen vehicle was Iraq, on which he genuinely views success in the same terms as the administration. He won over a share of Bush fundraisers (who have failed him up to now) and some Bush operatives, but significant parts of the Bush political family went over to Romney, joining at least a few of McCain's 2000 enthusiasts.

In truth, McCain's only route to the nomination was not to appease his former enemies but to scare them. He had to be the one person standing between them and the petrifying prospect of a Hillary Clinton or a Barack Obama presidency. Everything right-wingers loathed about the John McCain of 2000 describes what his party most needs now.

His independence from Bush would be an asset in light of the president's manifest failures. His reform enthusiasms stand as the perfect antidote to the corruption of the last Republican Congress. His old straight talk would be such a relief after so much prevarication and fabrication from this White House.

He could have promised to "build a bigger Republican Party ... by attracting new people to our cause with an appeal to the patriotism that unites us and the promise of a government that we can be proud of again."

Thus spoke the maverick in 2000 in words almost perfectly suited for his party's plight in 2007.

But McCain made different choices — on principle about Iraq and on calculation about almost everything else.

In his book "Character is Destiny," McCain quotes Viktor Frankl, a Holocaust survivor from Austria, who declares that "everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms — to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

McCain is an admirable man because he seems to live by those words.

That means he will make no excuses for the choices he has made, even if they turn out to be tragic.

Dionne is a columnist for The Washington Post. He can be reached at postchat@aol.com.

Gingrich-Giuliani ticket GOP's and nation's best hope

OPINION
THOMAS SOWELL
Syndicated columnist

Can you remember seeing a Republican expressing outrage? Democrats express outrage 24/7. Ted Kennedy alone has expressed more outrage than the entire GOP.

The case for conservatism cannot be too hard to articulate. Talk radio is dominated by articulate conservative talk show hosts.

Even the liberal print media have some very articulate conservative columnists such as Charles Krauthammer and others. There are also very articulate and conservative editorial pages at the Wall Street Journal and other newspapers, as well as similarly articulate conservative periodicals. Only where it counts — in Washington — are conservatives tongue-tied.

Even some Republican leaders recognize that former Republican whip Tom DeLay said much during a recent interview on the Rush Limbaugh show. After rattling off a list of achievements by the House when it was under Republican control, DeLay was asked why nobody knows about those achievements. He admitted that Republicans did a lousy job of getting their story out.

Something similar was implicit in remarks by former House Speaker Newt Gingrich when he pointed out that there are congressional districts where most people have conservative values but where they are represented in Congress by a liberal Democrat.

The Republicans' verbal ineptness would be their problem, and the rest of us could let them stew in their own juices, except for one thing. At a crucial time in the history of this country and of Western civilization, the Democrats are embracing foreign policies with a long track record of defeat, which can be punctuated by the ultimate defeat, terrorist nations and movements with nuclear weapons.

That is the background against which the records of aspiring presidential candidates of both parties must be judged.

Among the Democrats, the various candidates all seem to be trying to outdo each other in advocating defeatist policies, as if we can unilaterally call off the war on terror by pulling out of Iraq with our tail between our legs, turning the country over to the terrorists as a base from which to destabilize the region and launch more attacks against the West.

That is why it is important, even for those of us who are not Republicans, that the Republicans come up with a candidate who not only has guts and brains but who also knows how to communicate.

Looking for an articulate Republican narrows the field considerably. The most articulate, though in different ways, are Rudolph Giuliani and Newt Gingrich.

There is no question that Gingrich is politically savvy and, at the same time, is someone with a real grasp of the larger historic issues at home and abroad. He might well make the best president of all the candidates in either party. But what kind of presidential candidate would he make? He is certainly very articulate, but in the low-key and sometimes ironic manner of a college professor, which he once was.

It is hard to recall Newt Gingrich expressing any outrage, even when he was falsely accused of abandoning and starving the poor by not appropriating enough money for programs to help them — after he had in fact increased the spending for such programs.

Rudolph Giuliani is a New York street kind of guy, who doesn't respond to lying attacks with professorial detachment, irony and understatement. He is a fighter.

Maybe a presidential ticket with Gingrich and Giuliani, or Giuliani and Gingrich, would be the Republicans' best hope — and the country's. It would certainly be a big improvement over some of the candidates the Republicans have put out there in the past.

Write to Sowell c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045; or by e-mail at creBors@aol.com.

Letters

NOT ADDING UP

State math standards fall short of adequate

Those concerned about math achievement in Colorado Springs should not be encouraged by comments of local administrators in The Gazette's April 8 article, "CSAP math scores drop as students age." These administrators note that they are "refining their curricula to match the standards students are being held to." It would be one thing if Colorado had world-class math standards, or even good standards, but it does not. In fact, the Fordham Foundation gives them a "D" as to content and rigor.

When Colorado adopted its math standards in 1995, the panel in charge relied heavily (as did many states) on standards set out in 1989 by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. These standards, not written by mathematicians, recommended decreased attention to pencil and paper calculations, memorization of facts and algorithms, and direct instruction by teachers. The failure of these standards to allow students to develop mathematical fluency has been so pronounced that the NCTM had to back away from them last fall with the publication of its Curricular Focal Points document.

This document noted that, yes, computational fluency actually is important, and recognizes, belatedly, that math is foundational and what needs to be learned in the early grades is critical for success in higher level math.

I can understand why school districts want to focus on preparing kids for CSAPs, because that is how they are graded. However, our bad standards drive our CSAP questions and when schools teach to those standards, the result is that kids are not being taught or tested on what they need to know to be successful in higher math. The ACT, cited in the article, sets College Readiness Benchmarks for subjects tested and for math; it is 22. This means that a student who scores a 22 is ready for college-level algebra. Locally and statewide, only 35 percent of high school juniors taking the ACT last year scored a 22 or above. According to ACT, 65 percent of our students are not prepared to take algebra in college. This crisis will not be fixed by focusing on standards that don't set up students for success in math.

Carla Albers
Colorado Springs

Bad math education results in lending woes

I read about how, apparently, the ability of students to understand math deteriorates as they advance through school. I have two comments. The story said the problem might be because the students find the math to be irrelevant. The current problems with mortgage defaults are, in part, because the borrowers did not understand percentages well enough or how to determine the future payment requirements at higher interest rates. Perhaps the teachers should invite a banker or a homeowner to explain the issue in these terms. This math seems very relevant to me.

Further, the article stated that some areas on the test might not have been taught. The solution is more time in math class. If that means longer school days or a longer year, so be it. Students in other countries are learning the skills required to obtain well-paying jobs. If our students want to compete, they need to learn what is required.

Ed Storey
Falcon

VICTOR RECALL

Mayor doesn't get credit for good things she's done

All of the mayoral candidates say they will change the pay for the mayor position in Victor. They cannot make any change in the pay during this term. The recall does not change the length of the term. Voters still have to decide if they want to pay someone who has done the job for the past five years or pay someone based on the qualifications they say they have. Even if I am recalled, the position is paid to the end of the term.

What they consistently leave out of their rhetoric is that I held this full-time position for four years for $420 a month because the city conditions required it (it still requires a full-time person).

In 5 1/2 years, I have created a financial benefit to the city of $3.8 million. The only contribution this group has made is two recall elections costing more than $10,000, so far. I have not heard one of these candidates talk about anything positive in the entire five years since I took office. I do not believe I could have taken office with the intention of messing up everything and not accidentally done one thing right. Are they so blinded by their personal agendas that they can't see any improvements to Victor?

The candidates and the recall committee have never managed to find the connection between the way things are being done and the fact that things are getting done.

Every candidate wants to go back to the way it was when the meetings were a free-for-all and they were provided with a captive audience for their opinions, not understanding representative government or the need for it. Look at the accomplishments of the present administration, ask yourself if their criticism is justified. Then vote no on the recall on April 24.

Kathy Justice
Mayor
Victor

CRIME PREVENTION

Armed, law-abiding citizens drive out violent predators

I want to thank The Gazette for its excellent Our View regarding the assault on the Second Amendment by Sen. John Morse, as evidenced by his efforts to disarm Colorado citizens ("Triggering trouble?" April 8). Morse is wrong when he attempts to disarm law-abiding citizens of Colorado.

As a law enforcement officer, Morse should appreciate the difference between being unarmed and at the mercy of a violent criminal vs. being armed and able to defend your life if necessary.

Having a firearm for self-defense is like insurance. You don't need it until you need it. Insurance policies must be in force 24/7. Not being armed 24/7 is like not having insurance policies in force and hoping the policy will pay when you need it

The benefit to society when responsible law-abiding citizens are armed is that violent, predatory criminals have to consider the risk to themselves. That's why they prey on victims they perceive to be weak, unable, or unprepared to protect themselves. Colorado needs many thousands more concealed carry permit holders. That's a violent criminal's worst nightmare.

Concealed carry permit holders are the most law-abiding citizens you will meet. One misdemeanor disorderly conduct offense, DUI, domestic violence complaint and they will lose their permit. The debate over the efficacy of concealed handgun permits is really over. More armed law-abiding citizens means fewer violent predatory crimes.

Morse was elected to office not to disarm law-abiding Colorado citizens, but to help effect policies that will reduce crime and improve public safety. Disarming law-abiding citizens is putting out the welcome mat to violent criminals.

Jim Sherwood
Colorado Springs

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Parents must take action to give kids good habits

I saw one of the most ridiculous things I have ever seen on the news recently. It stated that television commercials advertising candy, chips and high-fat foods were responsible for childhood obesity. Some people even went so far as to suggest the government step in and ban the ads.

I have a wild suggestion: Why don't parents get off their behinds and actually do things with their children so the children aren't watching all that television? People are so quick to blame everyone and anything for their children's obesity, when the problem would be greatly reduced if those children actually had better things to do than sit in front of a television.

And those children aren't the ones purchasing all that high-fat food.

Wake up, parents, and take responsibility for your children. Plan activities with your children and stop buying all that junk. Who is running your house, anyway? The blame game has to stop.

Elizabeth Hoskins
Fountain

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

BY MAIL
Send comments to Letters to the Editor c/o The Gazette, P.O. Box 1779, Colorado Springs, CO 80901.

BY FAX
Call 636-0202

BY E-MAIL
opinion@gazette.com

Letters to the editor must include the author's full name, address and daytime phone number for verification. No letters from anonymous authors or those using pen names will be considered. Priority will be given to brief letters. Because of the volume of letters we receive, we cannot respond to each submission that is not published. Authors are limited to one published letter every six weeks. The Gazette reserves the right to edit submissions for length, taste and clarity. No e-mail attachments, please. All readers' submissions become exclusive property of The Gazette.

MIKE DANIELS

NEWS 5 FIRST 5/30

A powerful spring storm is pushing our way. The worst of the storm hits late tonight into Friday afternoon. Wind and snow could produce blizzard conditions, with heavy snow in some areas.

Mike Daniels forecasts the weather at 5, 6 and 10 p.m. for Channels 5 and 30.

TODAY	FRI.	SAT.	SUN.	MON.
Storm coming	Snow, wind	Sun returns	Much warmer	Showers
47/28	30/22	48/34	62/38	50/35

PIKES PEAK ALMANAC

Official readings measured at Colorado Springs Airport

TEMPERATURE

High yesterday	49
Low yesterday	28
Normal high	58
Normal low	30
Record high	80 (1982)
Record low	8 (1997)

PRECIPITATION

Yesterday	0.00"
Month-to-date	0.19"
Year-to-date	1.33"
Normal month-to-date	0.52"
Normal year-to-date	2.21"

Precipitation after 5 p.m. yesterday is not included in totals

SUN

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise	6:28 a.m.	6:26 a.m.
Sunset	7:33 p.m.	7:34 p.m.

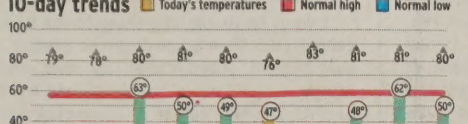
MOON

	Today	Tomorrow
Moonrise	3:50 a.m.	4:21 a.m.
Moonset	2:04 p.m.	3:17 p.m.

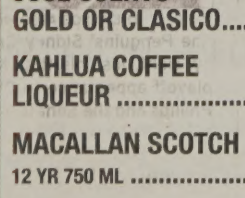
New	First	Full	Last
Apr. 17	Apr. 24	May 2	May 9

10-day trends

Today's temperatures · Normal high · Normal low



24-HOUR FORECAST



EXTREMES

STATEWIDE YESTERDAY

Hottest	58 Lamar
Coolest	0 Monarch

NATIONWIDE YESTERDAY

Hottest	94 Imperial, Calif.
Coolest	3 Stanley, Idaho

SNOWFALL

Yesterday	0.0"
Month-to-date	0.3"
Season-to-date	26.4"
Normal month-to-date	3.2"
Normal season-to-date	40.1"

SNOWPACK

PERCENT OF NORMAL

Arkansas River	93%	North Platte River	80%
Colorado River	84%	South Platte River	103%
Gunnison River	70%	Yampa River	67%

Source: Water and Climate Center Snotel Network

AVALANCHE DANGER

Central mountains	Moderate to considerable
Southern mountains	Moderate to considerable

UV INDEX

HIGH 6

Very high 12 · 10 · High 8 · 6 · Mod. 4 · 2 · Low 0

The higher the number, the greater need for skin and eye protection.

The Weather Channel weather.com

AIR QUALITY INDEX

Ozone	44	Good
Particulates		Unavailable
Carbon Monoxide		Unavailable

AQI Scale: 0-50 is good; **51-100** moderate; **101-199** unhealthy; **200-299** very unhealthy; **300** or higher is considered hazardous.

Ozone measured at Air Force Academy
Others measured at Meadowland & Academy Blvd.

Source: El Paso County Department of Health and Environment

RESERVOIRS

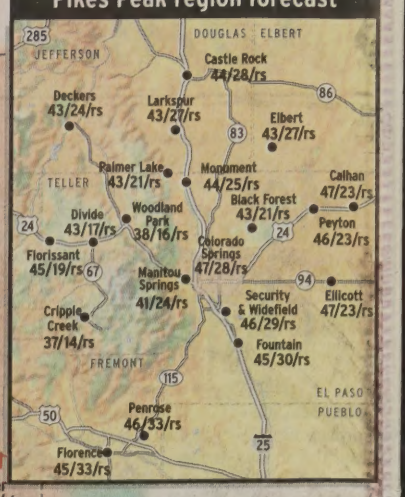
Reservoirs are **79.6% full**
Reservoirs are normally **77.2% full** this time of year.

Source: Colorado Springs Utilities

TODAY'S WEATHER

Updated weather information: Go to www.gazette.com | **Current road conditions:** Call toll-free 1-877-315-7623, www.cotrip.org

Pikes Peak region forecast



COLORADO

City	Yesterday hi/lo/wx	Tomorrow hi/lo/wx
Alamosa	46/21/pc	42/17/sn
Boulder	50/35/pc	34/24/sn
Buena Vista	40/21/c	27/17/sn
Canon City	51/30/pc	38/27/sn
Cortez	48/21/sh	57/23/pc
Craig	43/23/c	51/20/c
Crested Butte	27/8/c	39/10/sn
Denver	50/27/pc	36/25/sn
Durango	48/26/pc	55/25/c
Fort Collins	52/34/pc	29/25/sn
Fort Morgan	53/28/pc	33/27/sn
Glenwood Springs	51/18/c	52/23/sn
Grand Junction	51/25/c	59/31/pc
Greeley	-/-/-	29/27/sn
Gunnison	39/18/rs	47/19/sn
La Junta	56/29/pc	38/25/rs
Lamar	58/28/pc	31/29/rs
Leadville	25/9/sn	24/10/sn
Limon	51/22/pc	33/26/sn
Montrose	49/22/sh	57/28/c
Pueblo	56/29/pc	38/28/sn
Rifle	50/18/c	56/26/c
Salida	44/23/c	32/19/sn
Telluride	36/21/sn	39/16/sn
Trinidad	55/21/pc	39/28/rs

Mtn. Resorts	Yesterday hi/lo/wx	Tomorrow hi/lo/wx
Aspen	39/18/c	44/17/sn
Breckenridge	-/-/-	31/17/sn
Copper Mountain	16/0/c	22/10/sn
Keystone	-/-/-	32/19/sn
Monarch Pass, CO	16/0/sn	35/8/sn
Steamboat Sprg	35/21/pc	46/20/sn
Vail	24/9/c	39/18/sn
Winter Park	-/-/-	30/19/sn

Neighborhoods	Yesterday hi/lo/pcp
Black Forest	41/23/0.00
Briargate	45/27/0.00
Calhan	53/17/0.00
Downtown	-/-/-
Falcon	46/23/0.00
Fountain	-/-/-
Monument	42/36/0.00
Manitou Springs	47/29/0.00
Rockrimmon	-/-/-
Woodland Park	47/17/0.03

THE NATION

City	Today hi/lo/wx	Tomorrow hi/lo/wx
Albany	39/31/sn	43/30/rs
Albuquerque	69/42/pc	59/35/c
Amarillo	66/44/pc	60/33/sh
Anchorage	44/30/pc	43/31/pc
Atlanta	69/46/s	75/58/pc
Atlantic City	57/40/r	55/39/pc
Austin	78/66/pc	81/58/t
Baltimore	62/39/sh	55/40/pc
Billings	48/31/c	55/32/s
Birmingham	73/45/s	75/63/pc
Bismarck	43/26/c	49/28/pc
Boise	51/33/c	61/38/pc
Boston	39/35/rs	48/35/c
Buffalo	46/32/sh	41/33/sn
Casper	40/25/rs	43/21/pc
Christon., SC	80/50/s	79/60/s
Christon., WV	53/37/sh	59/47/pc
Charlotte	73/42/pc	68/50/pc
Chattanooga	65/40/pc	68/58/pc
Cheyenne	40/25/c	35/25/sn
Chicago	44/32/rs	48/35/pc
Cincinnati	51/35/sh	58/48/pc
Cleveland	48/33/sh	47/41/sf
Columbia, SC	78/44/s	76/55/pc
Columbus, GA	74/46/s	80/62/s
Columbus, OH	48/36/sh	56/46/pc
Dallas	74/59/pc	80/48/t
Daytona Bch.	84/60/s	82/65/s
Des Moines	39/31/pc	45/34/c
Detroit	45/33/rs	45/38/c
Duluth	38/24/c	40/27/pc
El Paso	82/57/pc	72/45/pc
Evansville	55/39/c	57/44/r
Fairbanks	43/25/pc	43/20/pc
Fargo	43/26/pc	48/30/pc
Flagstaff	47/26/sh	52/22/s
Fresno, CA	61/44/s	71/50/s
Goodland, KS	50/31/sh	34/28/sn
Great Falls, MT	45/27/pc	56/38/pc
Green Bay	36/27/sn	43/28/s
Hartford	42/34/r	50/32/c
Helena	49/23/c	56/36/pc
Honolulu	84/72/s	83/71/s
Houston	79/67/s	81/64/t
Indianapolis	45/30/sh	53/41/pc
Jacksonville	83/53/s	81/62/s
Kansas City	50/39/pc	48/34/r
Knoxville	62/37/pc	66/56/c
Las Vegas	68/48/pc	72/54/s
Little Rock	71/50/pc	70/55/t
Los Angeles	64/52/s	71/55/s
Louisville	52/38/c	61/46/sh
Memphis	68/53/pc	70/57/sh
Miami	88/73/t	86/72/s
Milwaukee	37/29/sn	42/29/s
Minneapolis	38/27/c	44/29/pc
Monterey	58/44/s	62/45/pc
Nashville	61/41/pc	67/50/sh
New Orleans	79/62/s	82/69/t
New York	51/39/r	56/37/pc
Newark	50/40/r	57/36/w
Norfolk	73/48/sh	63/48/pc
N. Platte, NE	48/30/pc	36/27/sn
Okla. City	65/50/c	60/38/t
Omaha	45/31/pc	50/32/sh
Orlando	89/61/t	88/66/s
Palm Springs	76/50/s	82/57/s
Philadelphia	60/42/r	55/39/pc
Phoenix	78/55/pc	78/57/s
Pittsburgh	47/33/sh	48/40/pc
Portland, ME	39/30/rs	47/32/rs
Portland, OR	54/40/sh	61/47/sh
Raleigh	73/41/pc	66/50/pc
Rapid City	44/29/c	51/30/pc
Reno	48/28/pc	61/38/pc
Sacramento	65/45/s	73/48/pc
St. Louis	54/37/c	54/39/r
Salt Lake City	48/35/sh	58/33/pc
San Antonio	79/66/pc	82/56/sh
San Diego	62/54/s	71/56/s
San Francisco	58/48/s	63/50/pc
San Jose	64/45/s	71/46/pc
San Juan, PR	88/76/pc	87/79/pc
Santa Fe	63/36/pc	50/28/rs
Seattle	54/41/sh	53/44/sh
Sioux Falls	39/28/pc	43/26/w
Spokane	55/35/pc	57/39/c
Springfield, IL	49/34/c	54/39/sh
Tampa	84/64/t	85/70/s
Topeka	52/39/c	46/34/r
Tucson	78/50/s	74/48/s
Wash., DC	65/40/sh	57/40/pc
Wichita	55/43/c	48/33/t
Wilmington, DE	60/41/r	55/39/pc

For more information: National Weather Service, 573-6846, www.crh.noaa.gov/pub

Forecasts, graphics and weather data © Weather Central, Inc., Madison, Wis., 2007
www.weatherpublisher.com

City	Today hi/lo/wx	Tomorrow hi/lo/wx
Acapulco	90/70/pc	91/70/pc
Amsterdam	63/44/pc	71/51/s
Athens	65/51/pc	69/52/s
Auckland	66/53/sh	62/51/sh
Baghdad	78/62/s	79/52/s
Bangkok	96/79/t	95/75/t
Barcelona	65/52/sh	67/51/s
Beijing	59/44/sh	63/45/pc
Berlin	63/44/s	65/47/s
Bermuda	76/65/pc	75/61/sh
Bogota	68/46/t	69/48/t
Brisbane	71/62/pc	76/59/s
Brussels	65/45/pc	70/50/pc
Budapest	66/45/pc	69/49/s
Buenos Aires	74/54/s	75/55/s
Cairo	73/52/pc	74/51/pc
Calgary	45/25/pc	51/33/pc
Caracas	90/77/pc	89/76/pc
Copenhagen	60/41/pc	63/43/s
Dhahran	92/70/t	86/71/t
Dublin	60/45/s	64/44/pc
Frankfurt	70/49/pc	72/50/s
Geneva	67/46/pc	71/50/pc
Hanoi	80/63/t	81/67/t
Havana	89/72/t	88/73/pc
Helsinki	45/34/s	51/37/pc
Ho Chi Minh	94/79/t	93/76/t
Hong Kong	75/65/c	77/64/sh
Istanbul	63/44/s	60/42/pc
Jerusalem	72/50/s	69/49/sh
Johannesburg	72/52/pc	71/51/pc
Kabul	80/57/s	82/58/s
Kuwait City	87/63/s	82/64/s
Lima	79/63/pc	78/62/pc
Lisbon	67/47/sh	69/49/pc
London	64/46/pc	65/47/c
Madrid	63/47/sh	66/48/sh
Manila	91/75/t	92/74/t
Mexico City	82/56/pc	85/57/pc
Monterrey	93/70/s	92/71/s
Montreal	39/26/r	36/24/sf
Moscow	48/36/sh	45/32/sh
Nairobi	80/61/t	82/63/t
Nassau	84/72/t	85/73/s
New Delhi	102/69/s	106/73/s
Oslo	54/36/pc	61/41/pc
Paris	67/43/sh	68/46/c
Prague	64/45/s	70/49/s
Rio de Janeiro	86/71/pc	83/72/pc
Rome	69/53/s	72/54/s
Santiago	69/49/s	67/47/pc
Sao Paulo	84/64/pc	82/65/t
Sapporo	47/36/sh	48/37/r
Seoul	58/45/sh	59/44/pc
Singapore	90/75/t	91/77/t
Stockholm	50/37/pc	61/43/pc
Sydney	72/53/s	74/54/s
Tel Aviv	71/52/s	69/53/sh
Tokyo	64/50/pc	65/51/pc
Toronto	39/29/sh	36/25/c
Vancouver	55/43/sh	50/46/r
Vienna	69/46/pc	73/53/s
Warsaw	59/41/pc	64/43/s
Winnipeg	45/24/c	45/27/c
Zurich	68/46/pc	71/52/pc

LIQUOR SPECIALS

1.75 LTR UNLESS STATED

BACARDI RUM LIGHT, GOLD OR SELECT.. $16.99
BARTON VODKA..... $8.99
BUCHANAN'S SCOTCH..... $54.99
BURNETT'S VODKA ALL TYPES..... $9.49
CANADIAN CLUB $14.99
CANADIAN LTD $9.49
CHRISTIAN BROS BRANDY..... $13.99
CROWN ROYAL $36.99
E&J VSOP BRANDY 750 ML... $7.99
FAMOUS GROUSE SCOTCH $28.99
GILBEY'S VODKA $10.49
GRAND MARNIER $54.99
J&B SCOTCH..... $29.99
JAGERMEISTER $33.99
JIM BEAM 1 LTR $12.99
JOSE CUERVO GOLD OR CLASICO..... $22.99
KAHLUA COFFEE LIQUEUR $25.99
MACALLAN SCOTCH 12 YR 750 ML $34.99
MAKER'S MARK $32.99
SKYY VODKA 90° 750 ML..... $19.99
SEAGRAM'S VODKA ALL TYPES..... $12.99
STOLI VODKA ALL TYPES..... $23.99
SUAZA MARGARITA MIX $2.99
X-RATED VODKA 750 ML.... $22.99

LIQUOR CITY

1506 N. Academy Blvd. • 380-8004
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SPECIALS VALID TILL 04/18/07 NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MISPRINTS

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GREAT EVERYDAY LOW PRICES

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B&J WINE COOLERS 4PK..... $2.49
CK MONDAVI 1.5 LTR WHITE ZIN ..... $6.99 ALL OTHER TYPES $8.99
CORBETT CANYON 3 LTR BOX ALL TYPES $8.99
LINDEMAN'S SOUTH AFRICA 750 ML ALL TYPES..... $4.99
LOUIS MARTINI 750 ML CAB-SAUV $9.99
NEWHAVEN 750 ML SAUVIGION BLANC..... $8.99
REDWOOD CREEK 1.5 LTR ALL TYPES..... $8.49
STERLING VC 750 ML ALL TYPES..... $10.99
SUTTER HOME 1.5 LTR CAB, CHARD, MERLOT OR MOSCATO..... $8.49 ALL OTHER TYPES $5.99
TURNING LEAF RESERVE 750 ML RIESLING OR W/ZIN ..... $4.49 ALL OTHER TYPE $5.99
WOODBRIDGE 1.5 LTR CAB, CHARD, MERLOT, PINOT GRIGIO, PINOT NOIR OR SHIRAZ..... $9.99 ALL OTHER TYPES $7.99
YELLOW TAIL 750 ML ALL TYPES..... $5.49

BEER SPECIALS

BRECKENRIDGE 12 PK BTLS $10.99
BRISTOL BREWING 6 PK BTLS ALL TYPES $6.29
BUD FAMILY 24 PK CANS ALL TYPES $16.49
COORS LIGHT 18 PK 16 OZ CANS..... $14.49
COORS ORIGINAL 6 PK BTL $3.99
GUINNESS DRAUGHT 6 PK BTLS..... $6.29
HEINEKEN OR AMSTEL 12 PK CANS..... $10.99
HOEGAARDEN 6 PK BTLS..... $6.99
KEYSTONE LIGHT 30 PK CANS..... $14.49
MIKES 12 PK BTLS..... $9.99
MILLER GD OR LITE 20 PK BTLS $12.99
MODELO ESPECIAL/NEGRA MODELO OR PACIFICO 12 PK BTLS $10.99
NATURAL LIGHT OR ICE 30 PK CANS..... $13.99
ST PAULI GIRL 12 PK BTLS $9.99
WARSTEINER REG OR DARK 12 PK BTLS $9.49

SMOKER CITY

DREAMS 5 PACK..... $21.99
GRAND PRIX..... $21.99
PALL MALL FILTERS..... $26.99
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PRIME TIME..... $23.99
LIGGET SELECT $24.99
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EVE..... $27.49
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KOOL..... $31.99
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NEWPORT..... $38.99
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